

Appl. No. 10/701,845  
Amendment dated February 21, 2005  
Response to Office Action of September 20, 2004  
Page 3

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following listing of claims will replace all prior listings and versions of the claims.

1. (Currently Amended): A method for preparing a concentrated inoculating composition for use with leguminous plants, comprising the following steps in the order given:
  - a) a culture medium suitable for supporting the growth of Rhizobium Japonicum bacteria is sterilized and cooled;
  - b) Rhizobium Japonicum bacteria is added to the culture medium and allowed to multiply for 46 hours at a temperature preferably of 28 C;
  - c) The result of the two previous steps is cooled to a temperature of 10 or 11 C;
  - d) a solution comprising powdered maltose saccharide, liquid maltose saccharide, lactose saccharide, and potassium sorbate is added to the combined culture medium and bacteria, said solution being prepared by the following steps:
    - 1) dissolving said powdered maltose saccharide, said liquid maltose saccharide, and said potassium sorbate in 100 liters of water;
    - 2) Sterilization at 121 C for 30 minutes;
    - 3) Cooling to 20 C.

**BEST AVAILABLE COPY**

Appl. No. 10/701,845  
Amendment dated February 21, 2005  
Response to Office Action of September 20, 2004  
Page 4

2. (Previously Presented): The method for preparing a concentrated inoculating composition as described in claim 1, further comprising the step of incorporating, prior to step a), 5 to 20% peat by weight which has been treated in accordance with the following steps:

- I) Heating the peat with distilled water at 100 C for forty minutes;
- II) Transferring 10% of the final volume of the peat of step I to a fermenting unit where the culture medium is to be prepared and where are added the rest of the chemicals which comprise the culture medium;
- III) Adjusting the pH to between about 6.9 to about 7.0.

3. (Previously Presented): A concentrated inoculating composition for use with leguminous plants, produced by the method described in claim 1.

4. (Previously Presented): A composition as described in claim 3, characterized in that it comprises by weight 5 to 20% peat previously treated in accordance with the following steps:

- I) Heating the peat with distilled water at 100 C for forty minutes;

Appl. No. 10/701,845  
Amendment dated February 21, 2005  
Response to Office Action of September 20, 2004  
Page 5

---

- II) Transferring 10% of the peat of step I in the final volume to the fermenting unit where the culture medium is to be prepared and where are added the rest of the chemicals which comprise the culture medium;
  
- III) Adjusting the pH to between about 6.9 to about 7.0.

**This Page is Inserted by IFW Indexing and Scanning  
Operations and is not part of the Official Record**

**BEST AVAILABLE IMAGES**

Defective images within this document are accurate representations of the original documents submitted by the applicant.

Defects in the images include but are not limited to the items checked:

- BLACK BORDERS**
- IMAGE CUT OFF AT TOP, BOTTOM OR SIDES**
- FADED TEXT OR DRAWING**
- BLURRED OR ILLEGIBLE TEXT OR DRAWING**
- SKEWED/SLANTED IMAGES**
- COLOR OR BLACK AND WHITE PHOTOGRAPHS**
- GRAY SCALE DOCUMENTS**
- LINES OR MARKS ON ORIGINAL DOCUMENT**
- REFERENCE(S) OR EXHIBIT(S) SUBMITTED ARE POOR QUALITY**
- OTHER:** \_\_\_\_\_

**IMAGES ARE BEST AVAILABLE COPY.**

**As rescanning these documents will not correct the image problems checked, please do not report these problems to the IFW Image Problem Mailbox.**